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REMARKS

Claims 1 to 4 remain in the present application. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended for which there is support in the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed.

Reconsideration of the Examiner's decisions and reexamination of this application are respectfully requested.

The §103 rejections:

I. Claims 1 and 3 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Applicant's Reference ("ApRef") in view of Washino U.S. Patent 5,484,963 ("Washino").

Claims 1 and 3 have been amended to clarify an aspect of the invention in which the solder resist openings are in a fixed location with respect to the electrode pads and this fixed location is offset from a center of the oblong shape of the electrode pad toward a center of the semiconductor chip.

The importance of this limitation will become apparent hereafter.

As the Examiner notes, ApRef teaches aspects of Applicant's invention except that the electrode pads near the periphery of the chip have an oblong shape and that the center of the solder resist opening is offset from a center of the oblong shape. The Examiner goes on to indicate that Washino teaches these aspects of Applicant's invention.

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Applicant respectfully disagrees with the teaching of the Examiner's assessment of Washino.

Washino is directed to a situation where the shape of the ceramic substrate changes during firing. That is, Figure 3 of Washino illustrates the situation where the ceramic substrate shrinks a little too much during firing so now the joining of the chip to the electrode pads occurs offcenter but at the end nearest the periphery of the semiconductor chip. Figure 4 of Washino is the opposite and illustrates the situation where the ceramic substrate shrinks less than expected during firing so now the joining of the chip to the electrode pads occurs offcenter but at the end away from the periphery of the semiconductor chip. So, depending upon the shrinkage of the ceramic substrate, the location of the joining of the chip, and hence the solder resist opening if there were one, is variable and not fixed with respect to the center of the electrode pads as required by Applicant's claims 1 and 3.

Accordingly, it would seem that the combination of ApRef and Washino fails to teach an important limitation of Applicant's claims 1 and 3. The combination of ApRef and Washino therefore cannot render Applicant's claims 1 and 3 obvious.

II. Claims 2 and 4 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over ApRef in view of Washino and in view of Masayuki Japanese Patent JP-09-102517 (query: Isn't Masayuki the ApRef?).

Inasmuch as claims 2 and 4 depend from claims 1 and 3, and since claims 1 and 3 are believed to be patentable, then claims 2 and 4 should be patentable as well. No independent ground of patentability is asserted for claims 2 and 4 at this time.

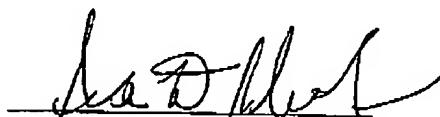
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Summary:

In view of all of the preceding remarks, it is submitted that all of claims 1 to 4 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner finds this application deficient in any respect, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Respectfully Submitted,
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